



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON INVASIVE SPECIES

Jim Doyle, Governor

One Point Place, Suite 101

Madison, WI 53719-2809

Office: 608/ 662-0923

Fax: 608/ 833-7179

www.invasivespecies.wi.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 8, 2005

Peter Murray
Chair

Wisconsin Association of Lakes
Madison

Becky Sapper
Vice Chair

The Nature Conservancy
Ashland

Laurie Osterndorf
Executive Committee

Department of Natural Resources
Madison

Will Christianson

Department of Tourism
Madison

Charles Henriksen

Henriksen Fisheries
Baileys Harbor

Harald E. (Jordy) Jordahl

Department of Administration
Madison

Gregory D. Long, ASLA

Private Member
New Berlin

Bernice Mattsson

Department of Commerce
Madison

Kenneth Raffa

University of Wisconsin
Madison

James Reinartz

University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee Field Station
Saukville

Dennis SeEVERS

Private Member
Arpin

Richard Stark

Department of Transportation
Madison

Melody Walker

Department of Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection
Madison

Contact:

Becky Sapper 715/ 682-5789

Czarapata Recognized as an Invader Crusader

The battle against invasive species in Wisconsin has been fought for many years. One person leading the charge against these unwanted, harmful pests was the late Betty Czarapata. Czarapata was a resident of Muskego, Waukesha County. Czarapata has been selected to posthumously receive one of the inaugural Invader Crusader Awards presented by the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species.

The Invader Crusader Award was created to honor Wisconsin citizens and organizations for their significant contribution to the prevention or eradication of invasive species that harm Wisconsin's land and waters.

Czarapata has been recognized as an Invader Crusader because of her remarkable contributions to increase people's awareness and actions to recognize, prevent and remove invasive plants.

"It is important that we acknowledge the growing threat from invasive species to our natural resources and work to find solutions," said Governor Jim Doyle. Invader Crusaders, such as Czarapata, are part of the solution. Czarapata became well-known throughout Wisconsin for her efforts to educate school groups and organizations while also working locally with volunteers to control invasive weeds in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

A school teacher by training, Czarapata wrote an elementary to middle school curriculum to educate students about invasive weeds, and published a full-color poster that illustrated the wildflowers that she was working to defend. In 1999, she self-published *Invading Weeds: A Growing Threat to Wisconsin's Biological Diversity*. The following year, she led the effort that resulted in then Governor Tommy Thompson declaring May as 'Garlic Mustard Awareness Month.'

Czarapata was one of the first volunteer coordinators of Weed-Out, a volunteer program in Milwaukee that organizes volunteers to control invasive weeds in the Milwaukee County Park System.

-more-

CZARAPATA—add one

In 2004, the City of Muskego passed a resolution naming a city wooded area "Betty's Woods". The Council wrote in the resolution that Czarapata actively crusaded against invasive plant species devoting many volunteer hours to remove them from City lands during her lifetime.

Czarapata's efforts will reach an even larger audience with the publication of her new book, *Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest: A Guide to Their Identification and Control*. This work is destined to become a landmark book on the subject of invasive species because of its comprehensive scope. In addition to color photographs (most taken by Czarapata) and descriptions of more than one hundred non-native and native invasive plants and effective measures to control them, the book includes sections on general control methods, organizing invasive plant control efforts, safety issues, ecological restoration, and the biological, aesthetic, economic, and ethical reasons for controlling invasive plant species.

"Perhaps most amazing is that Betty labored to write the book and ensure that it would be published while suffering through the malaise, nausea, and fatigue induced by repeated aggressive chemotherapy treatments for ovarian cancer," noted Ken Solis, a close friend of Czarapata's and a Weed-Out program co-founder. "Betty died in December of 2003, but ironically her greatest work in invasive weed education will be realized with the release of her book in July 2005 by the University of Wisconsin Press."

Although this was the first year of the award, the response was very positive.

"We received 31 nominations for 22 different people or groups," explained Becky Sapper with The Nature Conservancy and Invasive Species Council member. "There are so many that deserve recognition for their efforts to control invasive species in Wisconsin. We have high hopes that the number of nominations will continue to grow."

Other recipients of the 2005 Invader Crusader Award are:
St. Catherine's High School Environmental Club, Racine
Terri Lyon, Kiel
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Odanah
Kelly Kearns, Department of Natural Resources, Madison
Kristin Westad, Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, Dodgeville

Invasive species cause harm to ecological resources, causing losses in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

For more information on the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species or the Invader Crusader Award, call 715-682-5789.

This news release is sponsored by the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species. The Wisconsin State Legislature created the Council, to which Governor Doyle appointed 13 members. The Council's mission is to prevent and reduce the harmful impacts of invasive species on Wisconsin's environment and economy, as well as human well-being. Funding for this news release was provided by the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the Natural Resource Foundation's C.D. Besadny Conservation Grant Program.